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The Honorable Jason Chaffetz
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and
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2157 Rayburn House Office Building
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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The Honorable Elijah Cummings
Ranking Member, Committee on Oversight and
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Dear Mr. Chaffetz and Mr. Cummings,

I appreciate your work on drafting the *Postal Service Reform Act of 2016* and I write today to encourage you to include strong language to prevent unnecessary postal service consolidations in any final product. A strong and vibrant postal service is a critical part of our economy and immediate legislative relief is necessary to retain a responsive, quality postal service in this nation.

I am concerned that the draft legislation will not sufficiently protect postal facilities from unwarranted consolidation, including the Cherrybell Processing and Distribution Center in my district. The closure of Cherrybell would leave one of the nation's fastest growing population centers with only one processing facility, adversely impacting consumers and the business community. The partial consolidation of the Tucson center has already harmed individuals, businesses, and mailers in the community with delivery delays. A 2015 Tucson city survey found that 84 percent of individuals and 86 percent of businesses reported a noticeable delay in their mail delivery services since the first phase of consolidation and respondents reported waiting additional days for medicines, delays in Veterans benefits and medications and delays in receipts and payments for regular business transactions.

Specifically, to prevent degradation in mail service and secure the future of the Postal Service, service standards should be restored to 2012 levels. The 2012 cut in standards has caused a drastic slowdown in mail processing. Additionally, there should be language that enacts a minimum of a two year moratorium on closures. The intended cost cutting measures of consolidation have not materialized and have actually lost the Postal Services \$66 million in fiscal year 2015.ⁱ

The bill should also include comprehensive requirements to update the feasibility studies used to propose consolidating, as the current process has been entirely inadequate. Furthermore, there is a need for greater transparency in the postal consolidation process, and a method for communities to appeal determinations made by the USPS. Finally, the bill language must ensure that 'postal processing and distribution centers', such as Cherrybell in Tucson, are included in the definitions section so that there is no ambiguity.

The United States Postal Service is critical to small businesses, millions of Americans' jobs and is especially important to rural areas across the country. Postal delays are not merely a nuisance, but can be costly in terms of health impacts and businesses' most fundamental operations, such as meeting their payroll. It is vital that any reform bill includes clear language to prevent harmful consolidations.

I appreciate you accepting my comments and would like to offer my staff's assistance in working on specific language for the legislation for each of the issues raised above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raúl M. Grijalva". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Raúl" being the most prominent part.

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

http://www.prc.gov/docs/94/94968/CHIR_No_7.Second.Response.Set.Q16.pdf